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A BRIEF HISTORY
of the
STEINER FAMILY

1783 - 1927



By FLORENCE S. STEINER

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STEINER FAMILY.

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BY FFORENCE S. STEINER

My great grandfather was Daniel Steiner, he was born in Elsas, France, in the year of 1783. His boyhood days, passed swiftly by, and when he grew to manhood he took to himself a wife by the name of Suter. They lived in Elsas, and to them was born two children, Michel and Anna.

And it was about this time when he was ordained minister of the Mennonite Church. At that time there was a man by the name of Ammey, who for several reasons started another church, and it given the name of Amish Mennonite.

Great grandfather's companion soon died and he was left to care for the two little children.

In the year 1814, when Napoleon Bonapart was Emperor of France, and that terrible cruel war was held with Russia, the Emperor demanded those who had a team and wagon to haul war ammunition. So great grandfather started, but, after three days, he took his team and went back home. He was not arrested because it was a disastrous war of Bonapart's.

One day great grandfather beheld a maiden, (by the name of of Fannie Stauffer), how he loved her; he wanted her for his wife. They were mar-

born, only two little buds, but God took them to himself where they could bloom in heaven.

In 1836 they put a cellar under the house, built an addition to the kitchen and bought the first cook stove.

Then in 1837 another baby boy was born and they called him Peter, who was my grandfather known as P. S. Steiner.

In 1841 Michel left home, went to the home of his uncle in Indiana, and died there soon afterwards. Later on my great grandfather decided that he would build a new barn—but—a very sad thing happened, typhoid fever became an epidemic in the neighborhood. Daniel and John both became ill with the dreaded disease and both died that winter. Thru the death of these two young men their father postponed building the barn for two years.

And it came to pass that a widower with five children, living in that neighborhood, desired that Marie should become his wife, so in 1842 she and Christian Steiner were married.

Then in 1843. Such! a busy time. Some hauling lumber to build the new barn—and—the boys would be in the field plowing with oxen, and Oh! sometimes they were so lazy.

It was get-up! Get-up there all the day. When everything was ready and with busy hands the barn was started. The raising took place in June. Suddenly some one said, "Look." A man fell down from the perline of the barn. Hurriedly a man started on horseback for a doctor. When the physician arrived he found the man's skull was

fractured. But with medical care and attention he recovered again.

One day great grandfather took a load of grain to the Akron grain market. After the grain was unloaded he started homeward, and it happened that day that his youngest son, Peter, was with them. Traveling along a roadway with timber on either side, Peter jumped down off the wagon to look for some nuts. He found hazel nuts and filled his pockets with them. I suppose he was very happy when he had hazel nuts to eat on the way home. But! today what a change. Timber and hazel nuts can not be found at that place. For today that very spot is almost the center of Akron.

When summer and autumn were over and the winter days would come, then these little tots, boys and girls, would follow the winding path thru the woods until they reached the little logschool house. But they did not go to school very long; only a few short terms and their school days would be over. And it was so, that when these little tots would get their hair cut they were not allowed to burn it, for they were told that if they burnt their hair they would have a continuous headache. Then the little chaps would say, Let me throw it out doors, and the wind will blow it away. In reply to this they were told that the birds would find it and build nests with it. Then you would become very forgetful. Now be good children, they would tell them. Take the hair and put it in a little hole, then cover it up with ground, and everything will be alright.

It happened one morning in 1846 that about the middle of May there was a severe frost; and I wonder if the little boys and girls did not feel like crying, when it was discovered that all the fruit was frozen.

Some time later that young man whose name was Christ, decided to venture out, just a little. He went to Paint Township, Wayne County, Ohio, to visit some friends, and while visiting there, one day he saw something. Ah! it was a beautiful maiden, and her name was Catherine Welty. I cannot tell just how it all came about, but anyway they got married in the year of 1850, and moved to Putman County.

But the following year 1851 my great grandfather was taken away. He was living in America 26 years and during that time he was faithful in preaching the precious word of God. Church services were held in homes, and he would walk many, many miles to preach God's word. Often walked to Sugar-Creek Township and other places. He died in the month of December while living on the same farm he bought from the government in the year 1825.

Some time after the death of his father Christ and his companion bought the old homestead, and moved back to Milton Township, Wayne County, Ohio.

Years glided by and in the summer of 1854 it was cold and wet. Corn did not mature and early in November it began to snow. It snowed and snowed a real snow storm, and it became so cold the thermometer dropped below zero. The corn in the crib was frozen and so was that in the shocks. The farmers decided to get corn from Southern Illinois.

And so happened that a man living near them, by the name of Ferdanand Shondel, decided that

Catherine and he would become one, and in the year about 1855 they too were married.

In this same year there was no rain after wheat harvest until the last week in October.

The family scattering out one by one—and so it was that Peter began to wish he could settle down in a home of his own too; and he beheld a maiden fair, not far away. They wedged their lives to each other and were married in the year 1858. Esther Locker was his companion's name. They were my grandfather and grandmother.

It was found that for several years there were eight men living in Milton Township within four miles of each other, by the name of Peter Steiner. And it happened one day, November 5, 1858, while my grandparents were living in Gilford Township, Medina County, Ohio, that a little boy came to live with them. They called him Daniel Theredore, (who is my father.)

In 1859, one morning about June 5th, there was found to be some snow. Wheat was headed and corn was six inches high. Both of these crops were frozen. Flour advanced in price \$5 to \$10 a barrel on very short notice; but it soon dropped back to \$3 again. Much backwheat was sown.

And what about the fruit? Why that was frozen too. All except some on very high ridges. My! those farmers who had hilly land surely would not complain then, when they were the only ones who had any fruit.

It was about this time when Peter, his companion and their little son, moved on a farm. It seems farm life was the desire of their hearts.

But not much has been said about David. Well he had bought 40 acres of land; and it came to pass that a maiden from Germany, came to Wayne County, and in a short time she became acquainted with a man who had 40 acres of land; and it happened in 1860 she became the wife of David.

Time glides by so swiftly, when Peter, his companion and little son Daniel, were living on a farm in Sharon Township, Medina County, Ohio, and it was on the third day of August, 1860, when another little boy came to live with them. They called him John Wesley. These little boys, Daniel and Wesley, spent many happy hours together playing. I imagine I can see them run and jump. When once they were big enough to follow papa when he would bring the cows to the barn, "Its milking time," he would say, then these two little fellows would eagerly wait. I imagine they were good too, for no doubt after mamma was thru milking the cows she would give them each a brimming cup full of rich yellow milk to drink.

Days went by and when New Years day came 1864, it was very cold. The thermometer dropped 30 to 35 below zero. My! what a cold day. It was wet too; and over a large area where the ground was full of water, the wheat was killed.

As the months passed by it so happened that on the 10th day of May, while living in Milton Township, Wayne County, Ohio, soon after the noon meal was over it began to rain, and then about seven o'clock in the evening, it began to snow and as the snow flakes were falling on the outside of grandpa's home, everything was snug and cozy on the inside, and then a baby girl was

born, how welcome she was. They named her Sarah ^{Ellen} ~~Helen~~. But! the next morning what a pitiful sight—the fruit trees, which were already out in bloom; but now they were covered with snow. In a short time the sun began to shine and melted the snow away—and I believe the sun was shining in grandpa's home too. I imagine I can see Daniel and Wesley standing close by and watching over their little sister. No doubt they promised mamma that they would always be good to her.

It came to pass one day when grandpa was riding a horse that was trodding along a country road, when suddenly the horse became very frightened. Grandpa began to look in this direction and then in that, and he saw a big snake up in a tree and it was swinging on the branches. He tied his horse got a big club, and after some effort succeeded in getting the snake down and killed it. He then measured the big black thing and it was six feet long. Before this took place grandpa did not believe that snakes could climb trees, but now he was convinced that such things really were true.

He often told me the story of a man whom he personally knew. This man had a red beard and it happened that he lived near an old man, who was said to be over 100 years old. Well it came to pass that this old man died, and the man who had the red beard took his own razor and shaved this old man who had died. Later on the man whose beard was red turned white. Sometime afterwards my grandpa happened to meet this man and made this remark: "Why you made quite a change since I saw you last, 'cause your beard has turned so white," "Oh! yes, yes," the other replied, and its, its, all my own fault too. I,

I, should have, have, known better. He then went on to tell about the time he used his own razor to shave that old man who had died. "That's why my beard turned white," he went on to say, "It's my own fault; I know it is; I'll know better next time."

How grandpa would laugh when he would tell me these stories about some people who was so superstitious years ago.

He said, "One time he had a cow that did not seem to be very well." It happened one time that a German man saw the cow. "Oh!" says he, to my grandparents, "I know what is wrong with your cow; she has hollow horns and a wolf in her tail." "Now!" says he, "cut the skin apart on her tail about four inches and put some salt and pepper in, then bore a hole in her horns, and in a short time your cow will be well again." How superstitious some people were anyway.

In the year 1865 most of the farmers owned a bunch of sheep, and it was about the 5th day of June when it began to rain. It rained and rained for 40 hours. It was a cold rain too; from the northwest, and all sheep that were shorn and not given shelter perished.

The following year 1866 while grandpa's were living in Chippewa Township, Wayne County, Ohio, it was a beautiful clear day, soon after breakfast on the 9th day of May when a baby boy came to their home, wishing to make that his stopping place. They decided to call him Willis Jerome.

Well, it was time to plant corn, so grandpa began getting seed corn ready. And when the corn was shelled he began picking up the corn cobs, saying that they were so good to start fire with quickly; (the other man that was with him) began to speak and said,



“Why Peter don’t you know any better? Why if you burn those cobs you will have smote in your corn.” Grandfather’s costume was to burn the cobs, but he never was troubled by having smote in his corn.

In 1867, on Thanksgiving day, there was a big snow storm. It seemed to come from the northwest; and it continued to snow for about thirty hours. After the snow flakes ceased to fall it was found to be 20 inches deep.

Another year has glided by, and while grandpa’s were living in Milton Township, Wayne County, O., on Nov. 18, 1868, it was snowing and a cold bad day; but soon after midnight on Nov. 19th another son was born. What a big fat baby. I imagine I see grandpa go close to the cradle, how he would watch that little son with a merry twinkle in his eye. They thot the name Thomas Edward was quite becoming to that little fellow, so that’s what they called him

During this time Daniel and Wesley were going to school, and they were interested too, but Daniel had a desire for farm life and the caring of fruit, while Wesley wanted to be a school master.

But time is passing on. The year 1871 has arrived and brings with it another little son. It was a beautiful winter day Jan. 13th when David Henry was born. Grandpa’s were living in Milton Township, Wayne County, Ohio. When Henry was about four years old, it happened one winter evening that his parents, his brother Edward and a few other friends were out sleigh riding. Near midnight a great light appeared in the sky, a flock of stars came from the southwest and went northeast. They moved very fast and no one was able to count them. Grandpa said he never before or since saw such a wonderful sight.

But nothing has been said about my great grandmother. Well after the death of her husband in 1851 she made her home with the children for many years, but after some time the Lord saw fit to take her to himself also. By this time Daniel had grown to manhood, and it happened one day when he was wearing blue patched overalls, that he met a young girl by the name of Mary Musser. As time went on love grew more and it came to pass on a Saturday afternoon in Easton, Ohio, the 12th day of November in the year 1881 they were united in marriage. The next spring 1882 they moved on the old homestead where Mary was born and raised. They started raising berries and fruit, and have lived on the same farm ever since, Daniel and his companion, who are my father and mother.

My grandparents and the other children Wesley, Ellen, Willis, Edward and Henry were still together in a family group, but one by one they are starting out and settling down in a home of their own.

In the year 1885 on the 8th day of March, Ellen became wife of David Derhammer, and in 1887 the 20th day of October, Wesley was was united in marriage to Mary Alice Yoder; and four years later, Edward took to himself a wife by the name of Mary Irvin. They were married on Dec. 24, 1891; but it was only a little while until Mary was taken away. She died on March 30, 1894, and was laid to rest April 1 in Beach Grove cemetery in Milton Townspip, Wayne County, Ohio.

On the following year 1895, on the 19th day of December, Henry was married to Ida Richard. Now by this time Willis too had grown to manhood. He was a country lad and worked for a man by the name

of Pardee, on what is called the Stony Ridge farm, located three miles north of Wadsworth; and it so happened that a young lady by the name of Mary Blough worked there also—there is no doubt but what Willis noticed that she was a splendid cook and an excellent housekeeper, and just how it all came about I do not know, but anyway he loved her and wanted her for his wife. They were married on Oct. 26, 1896, and continued working for these same people for a long while.

During this time Edward was teaching school and it came to pass one day that he met a young lady by the name of Laura Eckard, who was an old time friend of his, for she was one of his school mates in the year 1882-1883. They became very fond of each other, and then one day the news spread thru the country that Ed Steiner, the school master, was married to Laura Eckard. They were married at the home of her parents on the evening of Jan. 27, 1897.

Now that the children are all married and living in their different homes, Grandpa and grandma are left alone, but what joy it brought them when the children would gather at their home in the form of a reunion, and how the little grandchildren did love their grandma, for she was always so kind and good to them. But it was only a few years until grandma's health began to fail. She became afflicted with diabetes which caused her death the 20th day of August, 1905, at the age of 71 years, 4 months and 23 days. The funeral services were held in the Crown Hill Mennonite church of which she was a member. Services were conducted by Rev. Jacob Gerig. She was laid to rest in the Crown Hill cemetery.

Later on the old homestead where my grand-

parents lived was sold, and sometime afterwards it was decided that grandpa should make his home with his children.

It was many years after grandma's death when Wesley noticed that his health was failing. His condition became serious and he was operated on at the Wooster City hospital, but to no avail. He was a victim of that dreaded disease, cancer. He passed away April 14th, 1921, age 60 years, 8 months and 11 days. The funeral services were held at his home 708 N. Bever St., Wooster, O., and he was laid to rest in the Wooster cemetery.

Some time afterwards Mary, the wife of Willis, was also afflicted with poor health. Dropsy and heart trouble which caused her death May 8, 1925, at 8 p. m. Funeral services were held in the Church of Christ at Wadsworth, the church of which she was a member.

Another year has passed. In July 4th, 1926, grandpa had reached the age of 89 years, but what changes were taking place. His eyes were growing dim, his hearing very poor, and his step very slow. All was the result of old age. One bright morning in August while living at our home, he fell and was put to bed after which he never walked again.

Daniel and Mary, his son and daughter-in-law, who took care of him, they would often dress him and put him in the rocking chair. On Tuesday afternoon January 11, 1927, he was sitting in a rocking chair like usual, ate his supper there, but that evening when my parents were getting him ready to retire for the night, he said, "I don't know what is wrong with me, I can't think right." We do not know for certain, but it is thought that he suffered a stroke sometime during the night, for Wednesday his condition was alarming.

Wednesday night and on Thursday he continued growing worse, and then about 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon Jan. 13th, while I was standing by his side, he peacefully passed away at the age of 89 years, 6 months and 9 days. The funeral service was held here at our home Sunday afternoon at 1 o'clock, and further services at the Crown Hill Mennonite church, of which he was member. Services were conducted by Rev. E. F. Hartzler and Rev. Jacob Gerig. He was laid to rest beside his companion who preceded him in death in 1905. He was the last one of his generation and was the oldest Steiner in the county. His entire life was lived in Medina and Wayne counties. He was president of a school board for 18 years and was a trustee for about 21 years. He was first uncle to 74; he was second uncle to 205, and was third uncle to 309, but many of these have preceded him in death. He was father to six children, of whom five are living. He was grandfather to 20 children, 17 were living at the time of his death. Since grandpa's death one of his grandchildren, my sister Clara, passed away also. She left us on Nov. 9th, 1927. Grandpa had also 27 great grandchildren, 25 of them are living.

Sometimes its the infant ones who are taken away; sometimes those in childhood and youth; sometimes the middle aged ones, and then sometimes the aged ones who have grown old and feeble. But one by one we are going, we are traveling towards the setting of the sun, yes traveling towards eternity. One by one the family circles are being broken, but I hope each one who reads these lines will fasten their eyes upon Jesus, and so live here below that when we are called to leave this earth we can meet in heaven, and be forever with the Lord and the dear ones who have gone before.

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